

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 SAM-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00 MC-01

ACDA-05 L-02 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 /073 W

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R 220830Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 874

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USCINCEUR

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 431

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: MASS, SP, GR, PO, MO

SUBJECT: GREEK-SPANISH TALKS ON AIRCRAFT PURCHASES

1. MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS (AGUIRRE DE CARCER) TOLD POLITICAL COUNSELOR THAT GOS HAS BEEN IN DISCUSSIONS FOR SOME MONTHS WITH GREEK GOVT OVER POSSIBILITY OF SALE OF ABOUT ONE SQUADRON OF F-5AS OR F-5BS FROM SPANISH INVENTORY TO GREEK AIR FORCE. AGUIRRE IMPLIED DISCUSSIONS WERE INSTIGATED BY GREEKS AND THAT THEY BEGAN BEFORE MILITARY JUNTA OVERTHROWN, BUT WERE CONTINUING WITH PRESENT CIVILIAN GREEK GOVERNMENT. HE ALSO HAD IMPRESSION THAT GREEKS INTERESTED IN PURCHASING F-5S FROM SPAIN RATHER THAN US BECAUSE OF SOME COLLING IN RELATIONSHIP WITH US AND BECAUSE OF GREEK DESIRE TO DIVERSIFY SOURCES OF SUPPLY OF MILITARY ITEMS.

2. ACCORDING TO AGUIRRE DISCUSSIONS NOW AT STANDSTILL BECAUSE SPANISH AIR FORCE HAS REVERSED EARLIER POSITION AND DECIDED IT CANNOT SPARE F-5S AFTER ALL. HE COMMENTED THAT, WHILE THERE LITTLE PROFIT FOR SPAIN IN  
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SUCH SALE, GOS REGARDS IT AS OPPORTUNITY TO KEEP

VALUABLE CHANNEL OPEN TO WHAT IT CONSIDERS AS IMPORTANT FELLOW MEDITERRANEAN STATE. HE ENQUIRED WHETHER USG WOULD BE INTERESTED IN COOPERATIVE ARRANGEMENT FOR PRODUCTION OF ADDITIONAL F-5S IN SPAIN FOR SALE TO GREECE. POLITICAL COUNSELOR COMMENTED THAT NUMBER OF PLANES IN QUESTION (ABOUT 20) SEEMED RATHER SMALL TO JUSTIFY RE-OPENING PRODUCTION LINE, BUT SUGGESTED THAT HE DISCUSS POSSIBILITIES WITH OFFICIALS OF CASA (STATE-OWNED AIRCRAFT PLANT) AND LOCAL NORTHROP REPRESENTATIVES.

3. COMMENT: FAIRLY CLEAR FROM OTHER FRAGMENTS OF INFORMATION THAT GREEKS WERE AMONG SEVERAL COUNTRIES CANVASSED BY GOS DURING PAST THREE YEARS IN EFFORT TO SELL OFF STOCK OF F-5S, WHICH UNTIL RECENTLY SPANISH AIR FORCE WANTED TO REPLACE. FORMER AIR MINISTER GENERAL JULIO SALVADOR REPORTEDLY BELIEVED THAT 70 F-5AS AND F-5BS CONSTRUCTED BY CASA UNDER LICENSING ARRANGEMENT WITH NORTHROP DID NOT FIT IN WITH SPANISH AIR FORCE MODERNIZATION PLAN AND PERSONALLY DIRECTED EFFORTS TO SELL THEM. OTHER COUNTRIES REPORTEDLY APPROACHED BY SPAIN ABOUT PURCHASE INCLUDE PORTUGAL, MOROCCO, LIBYA AND ECUADOR.

4. REASONABLE TO ASSUME SPANISH AIR FORCE TURN-ABOUT ON SALE PLANS, WHICH FOLLOWED REPLACEMENT OF SALVADOR BY CUADRA MEDINA AS AIR MINISTER, DIRECTLY RELATED TO MILITARY EMERGENCY IN SAHARA. F-5S APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN MOST USEFUL PLANE IN SPANISH INVENTORY FROM STANDPOINT OF SERVICEABILITY AND READINESS DURING LATE SUMMER AND EARLY FALL AIR BUILD-UP IN CANARIES IN RESPONSE TO MOROCCAN THREAT.  
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